

# GENERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## ISSUE SUMMARY:

The [Indian Environmental General Assistance Program](#) (GAP) is EPA's largest environmental capacity building grant for Tribal governments, providing financial and technical assistance to more than 500 Tribes and intertribal consortia. The [New GAP Guidance](#) was issued in 2022, providing Tribes with greater flexibility to address environmental priorities consistent with EPA's authorities. GAP promotes Tribal self-governance in several ways, including supporting Tribes to assess local environmental conditions, develop long-range strategic plans to address their environmental challenges, and establish environmental programs tailored to their needs and aligned with their long-range strategic planning goals. The overlap between Tribal environmental capacity building goals and EPA program priorities, including how EPA and Tribes will work together to achieve them, are captured in EPA/Tribal Environmental Plans, or ETEPs. EPA utilizes ETEPs and other GAP resources to evaluate GAP's performance in a newly developed, nationally consistent, performance management system named GAP Hub. In FY24, Congress appropriated \$72,200M for GAP. Generally, GAP funding levels have remained stagnant for the last 20 years, and the strength of those dollars has decreased by more than 20% since 2004.

## UPCOMING MILESTONES:

- AIEO launched GAP Academy and will develop at least four trainings for recipients and EPA staff by June 2025.
- Piloting ways to increase student internships between Tribes and Tribal Colleges and Universities/Native Serving Institutions through at least FY25.
- The first year of ETEP and solid waste reporting information/data will be available in GAP Hub in early 2025.

## BACKGROUND:

In 1992, Congress established GAP to provide grants and technical assistance to Tribes and intertribal consortia to plan, develop, and establish Tribal environmental protection programs consistent with other applicable provisions of law administered by EPA. The Agency works collaboratively with Tribal partners on mutually identified environmental and public health priorities to achieve these aims. Funding provided under the GAP is for the development of administrative, technical, legal, enforcement, communication, and outreach capacities needed to effectively administer environmental regulatory programs for eligible Tribes. GAP funds also may be used to assist in capacity building so that Tribes may meaningfully participate in EPA programs, as well as the development and implementation of Tribal solid and hazardous waste programs for Indian lands, including solid waste service delivery costs.

## KEY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS:

- ☒ Congress    ☐ Industry    ☐ States    ☒ Tribes    ☐ Media    ☐ Other Federal Agency  
☐ NGO    ☐ Local Governments    ☐ Other (name of stakeholder) \_\_\_\_\_

MOVING FORWARD:

In December 2024, EPA is prepared to brief the transition team on action items anticipated in early 2025.

LEAD OFFICE/REGION: OITA

OTHER KEY OFFICES/REGIONS: OGC, OLEM, REGIONS